

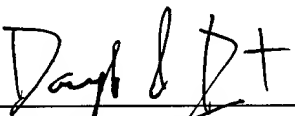
REMARKS

The Office Action notes that claims 1-18 are pending in the application. Through this response, claims 1 and 6 have been amended and claims 7 and 8 have been cancelled. The Applicants amended claims 1 and 6 to correct minor informalities and to incorporate the features of claims 7 and 8 into claim 1. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Independent claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tobe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,080,446; "Tobe"). Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of now cancelled claims 7 and 8. The Applicant notes that cancelled claim 8 stands as being objected to but otherwise allowable if re-written in independent form. Therefore, claim 1 now stands as allowable.

The remaining claims are dependent either directly or indirectly on independent claim 1 and are therefore allowable. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Valeria Rodriguez